

Honolulu, Hawaii

**MAR 19 2025**RE: H.B. No. 534  
H.D. 2  
S.D. 1

Honorable Ronald D. Kouchi  
President of the Senate  
Thirty-Third State Legislature  
Regular Session of 2025  
State of Hawaii

Sir:

Your Committee on Economic Development and Tourism, to which was referred H.B. No. 534, H.D. 2, entitled:

"A BILL FOR AN ACT RELATING TO LABELING REQUIREMENTS,"

begs leave to report as follows:

The purpose and intent of this measure is to prohibit the sale of any processed food item with raw ahi product as an ingredient by retail establishments without a label that states the country where the ahi was landed.

Your Committee received testimony in support of this measure from the Department of Land and Natural Resources, Hawai'i Farm Bureau, Fishing Tales with Mike Sakamoto, Hawai'i Farmers Union United, and four individuals.

Your Committee finds that local tuna fisheries and associated seafood markets are an important sector of the State's economy and food production. While the State is known for high-quality ahi, which is regulated by strict fishery management standards, imported tuna comprises an overwhelming percentage of sales at local retail establishments. Your Committee further finds that federal regulations that require seafood products to be labeled with the country of origin do not apply to prepared foods such as poke offered for retail sale at food service establishments. Due to the differences in labeling requirements, imported products are



sometimes deceptively marketed as "Hawaiian" or "local". By establishing labeling requirements for any processed food item containing raw ahi product, this measure will provide greater transparency to consumers, promoting informed purchasing decisions.

Your Committee has amended this measure by:

- (1) Inserting an effective date of July 1, 2050, to encourage further discussion; and
- (2) Making technical, nonsubstantive amendments for the purposes of clarity and consistency.

As affirmed by the record of votes of the members of your Committee on Economic Development and Tourism that is attached to this report, your Committee is in accord with the intent and purpose of H.B. No. 534, H.D. 2, as amended herein, and recommends that it pass Second Reading in the form attached hereto as H.B. No. 534, H.D. 2, S.D. 1, and be referred to your Committee on Commerce and Consumer Protection.

Respectfully submitted on  
behalf of the members of the  
Committee on Economic  
Development and Tourism,

  
LYNN DECOITE, Chair



